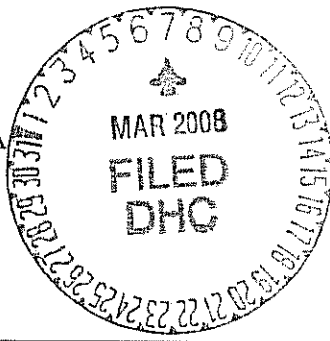


NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY



BEFORE THE
DISCIPLINARY HEARING COMMISSION
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR
08 DHC 6

The North Carolina State Bar,)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
Sherry M. Morris,)
Attorney,)
Defendant.)

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, complaining of defendant, alleges and says:

1. Plaintiff, the North Carolina State Bar, is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is the proper party to bring this proceeding under the authority granted it in Chapter 84 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, and the rules and regulations of the North Carolina State Bar promulgated thereunder.
2. Defendant, Sherry M. Morris, (hereinafter "defendant"), was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar on March 19, 1994, and is, and was at all times referred to herein, an attorney at law licensed to practice in North Carolina, subject to the rules, regulations and Revised Rules of Professional Conduct of the State of North Carolina State Bar and the laws of the State of North Carolina.
3. During all or a portion of the relevant periods referred to herein, defendant was actively engaged in the private practice of law in the City of Benson, Johnston County, North Carolina.

Upon information and belief, plaintiff alleges:

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

4. On or about the year 1993, defendant and Ronald D. Pressley (hereinafter "Pressley"), while both were law students at North Carolina Central University School of Law, began what would become a long-term intimate relationship.

5. Pressley graduated from law school in 1995 and sat for the July 1995 Bar Exam.

6. Pressley's 1995 application for a license to practice law was set for a full hearing before the Board of Law Examiners of the State of North Carolina (hereinafter "the Board"), in January 1996.

7. Defendant was subpoenaed to testify and did testify before the Board in January 1996 regarding their relationship, criminal charges involving Pressley, and matters relating to Pressley's character and general fitness.

8. Following the January 1996 hearing the Board denied Pressley's application to practice law.

9. On February 1, 1996, defendant gave birth to a child that was fathered by Pressley.

10. Between 1996 and 2001, defendant and Pressley continued their relationship.

11. Pressley was frustrated and angry over the Board's decision in 1996 to deny him a law license.

12. Pressley blamed defendant for "testifying against him" and believed defendant's disclosures to the Board in 1996 regarding their relationship and the criminal charges were the reasons his application for a law license was denied.

13. Between 1996 and 2001, Pressley did not visit with his child regularly, although defendant asked him to do so. Pressley repeatedly stated he “resented” the birth of the child and stated he thought that was one of the reasons he was denied his license in 1996.

14. Pressley repeatedly explained to defendant that once he had his law license and that burden was lifted from him, he would be able to have a normal relationship with their child and be the father he had not been.

15. Pressley continuously expressed to defendant that any future decision by the Board would weigh heavily on her testimony and that her testimony must support him to ensure a favorable decision for him from the Board.

16. Pressley was adamant that disclosure of their on-going intimate relationship to the Board would be fatal to his reapplication.

17. With the support of defendant, Pressley filed an application to stand for the July 2001 bar exam. Upon receiving that application, Pressley was noticed to appear before the Board for a full hearing which was conducted on October 17, 2001.

18. Prior to the hearing, defendant and Pressley discussed the testimony they would both give at the hearing related to their ongoing and intimate relationship. Pressley was concerned that admitting that their intimate relationship was continuing would hurt his chances to have his application approved.

19. Defendant and Pressley agreed that if the Board asked about the current status of their relationship, they would both falsely testify that the sexual relationship had ended.

20. At the hearing on October 17, 2001, as had been anticipated, defendant was asked, under oath, about the current status of her relationship with Pressley.

21. Defendant untruthfully testified that their intimate relationship had ended and had ended years earlier.
22. In October 2001, the relationship between defendant and Pressley had not ended.
23. Following the October 17, 2001 hearing before the Board, Pressley's application to stand the Bar Exam was approved, but he was unsuccessful on the examination.
24. Pressley next applied to stand the February 2002 Bar Exam, but again was unsuccessful. He next applied to stand the July 2002 exam and was again noticed to appear before the full Board.
25. Various lawsuits between defendant and Pressley delayed the actual hearing on Pressley's application to stand the July 2002 exam. When these lawsuits were finally resolved, the hearing on Pressley's July 2002 application was set for October 17, 2007.
26. Prior to the October 2007 hearing, defendant advised the attorney for the Board that she had given untruthful testimony to the Board during her testimony at the October 17, 2001 hearing.
27. On October 17-18, 2007, defendant appeared before the Board and testified that her testimony before the Board in October 2001 had been untruthful concerning her relationship with Pressley at that time.
28. Defendant self-reported her misconduct to the Bar by phone on or about October 19, 2007 and by letter dated October 22, 2007.

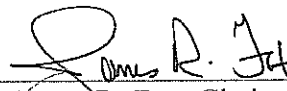
THEREFORE, plaintiff alleges that defendant's foregoing conduct constitutes grounds for discipline pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §84-28 (b) in that defendant violated the Revised Rules of Professional Conduct in effect at the time of his action as follows:

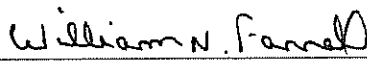
- a. By giving untruthful testimony to the Board of Law Examiners of the State of North Carolina, defendant: (i) knowingly made a false statement of material fact in violation of Rule 8.1(a) of the Revised Rules of Professional Conduct, (ii) engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Revised Rules of Professional Conduct, and (iii) engaged in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice in violation of Rule 8.4(d) of the Revised Rules of Professional Conduct.

WHEREFORE, plaintiff, the North Carolina State Bar, prays that:

1. Disciplinary action be taken against defendant in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. §84-28 and 27 N.C.A.C. 1B §.0114 as the evidence may warrant.
2. Defendant be taxed with the costs permitted by law in connection with the proceeding; and
3. For such other and further relief as is appropriate.

This the 5th day of March, 2008.


James R. Fox, Chair
Grievance Committee


William N. Farrell
Deputy Counsel
The North Carolina State Bar
P.O. Box 25908
Raleigh, N.C. 27611